

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of the present application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

The March 3, 2003 Office Action and the Examiner's comments have been carefully considered. In response, claims are cancelled and amended, and remarks are set forth below in a sincere effort to place the present application in form for allowance. The amendments are supported by the application as originally filed. Therefore, no new matter is added.

Inasmuch as the present amendment raises no new issues for consideration, and, in any event, places the present application in condition for allowance or in better condition for consideration on appeal, its entry under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.116 is respectfully requested.

PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

In the Office Action claims 1, 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over JP 9-13172 (Susumu et al.) in view of USP 5,605,574 (Tsunashima et al.). Claim 2 is rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Susumu et al. in view of Tsunashima et al., and further in view of JP 8-18083 (Taira et al.). Claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as being

unpatentable over JP 4-370921 (Komura) in view of JP 5-326676 (Akihiro) and USP 5,605,574 (Tsunashima et al.) or USP 6,183,183 (Goodwin et al.).

In response, claims 5-8 are cancelled and claims 1-4 are amended.

Claim 1 is amended to recite that the resilient mechanism is made from quartz and supports the support pins. Claim 2 is amended to remove reference numerals previously included in the claim. Claim 3 is amended to recite that the plurality of flexible members are made from quartz and each supports one of the support pins. Claim 4 is amended to recite that each flexible member comprises a leaf spring made from quartz.

Claim 4 is amended in view of the Examiner's comments as set forth in item 5 on page 4 of the Office Action. Claims 1 and 3 are amended because the cited references do not disclose, teach or suggest a resilient mechanism made from quartz which supports the support pins, nor that the resilient mechanism includes a plurality of flexible members made from quartz and each supports one of the support pins.

In the Office Action, the Examiner cites Susumu et al. as disclosing a CVD apparatus with a wafer supporting mechanism containing four lift pins placed equiangularly along a circumference and having resilient means for each lift pin. The

Examiner acknowledges, however, that the reference does not disclose that the resilient mechanism should be made from quartz or silicon carbide. To bridge the gap between the claimed invention and Susumu et al., the Examiner cites Tsunashima et al. as disclosing a resilient wafer support structure made of silicon carbide. Tsunashima et al. do not, however, disclose, teach or suggest a resilient mechanism made of quartz.

As indicated above, claims 1, 3 and 4 are amended to remove the reference of "silicon carbide" and now only recite "quartz." It would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the prior art teachings to substitute a resilient mechanism made from quartz, and/or a resilient mechanism which includes a plurality of flexible members made from quartz, based on the teachings of a resilient mechanism made of silicon carbide.

In view of the foregoing, claims 1, 3 and 4 are patentable over the cited references under 35 USC 102 as well as 35 USC 103.

Claim 2 is patentable over the cited references in view of its dependency on claim 1 and because the references do not disclose, teach or suggest a resilient mechanism made from quartz wherein the support pins are disposed in positions which support the wafer along the crystal orientation with respect to the crystal plane of the wafer.

In view of the foregoing, claims 1-4 are patentable over the cited references under 35 USC 102 as well as 35 USC 103.

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Entry of this Amendment under the provisions of 37 C.F.R. 1.116, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner disagrees with any of the foregoing, the Examiner is respectfully requested to point out where there is support for a contrary view.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the telephone number given below for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,


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